

Alternatives

to

Foster Care

Prepared pursuant to SB01-211

March 15, 2002

Acknowledgements

The Department acknowledges the contributions of the many individuals who graciously gave of their time and resources in the development of this report. Special recognition and appreciation is extended to the following groups and individuals:

Rose Community Foundation for their recognition of the need to support this essential endeavor through funding of the grant along with dedication of staff time and resources in hosting and arranging meetings of the task force to guide the undertaking.

The Governor's Office for supporting the Department to complete the work necessary for this report.

The many individuals including county department social/human service directors and staff, foster parents and interested citizens who participated in the SB01-211 survey.

The Task Force Members who volunteered their time and ideas to the project.

The Legislators and many child welfare professionals who participated in interviews to inform the researcher on the many areas covered by the report.

A very special thanks is extended to Creative Leadership Solutions for working with the Department and Rose Foundation to conduct research necessary to comply with the Legislation.

Table of Contents

Basis for the Report.....4

Background Information.....5

General Information.....6

Methods of Preventing Out-of-Home Placement.....8

Innovative Approaches to Foster Care & Programs that Enhance the Ability to Provide Stability for Children.....11

Colorado’s Foster Care Program.....15

Summary and Recommendations.....17

Appendices.....18

 A – SB211 Task Force Members.....19

 B – Organizations/Research Providing Information for Report.....20

 C – People/Organizations Interview by Creative Solutions.....21

 D – Organizations with Innovative Programs.....23

 E – Facts about Children in Out-of-Home Placement & Funding....24

 F –Creative Leadership Solutions.....26

 G – SB 211 Survey Results.....27

Basis for the Report

26-1-111(7) mandating the preparation of this report is as follows:

(a)...The scope of the State Department's evaluation and recommendations pursuant to this subsection (7) shall include, at a minimum, methods of preventing out-of-home placement, family preservation services and innovative approaches to foster care.

(b) The State Department shall research and develop recommendations for the possible use of alternatives to the current foster care system that will enhance the ability of the state to provide greater stability for a young child in need of out-of-home placement and that will be in the best interests of that child. The Executive Director shall oversee and supervise the research. The State Department shall consult with various organizations involved in foster care and children's issues regarding the scope and design of the study. The State Department shall specifically examine alternatives that accommodate placing children in a setting that fosters stability, familiarity, and security. In addition, the State Department shall investigate approaches to placement of children that will not disrupt existing sibling groups. The State Department shall limit the focus of research and recommendations described in this paragraph (b) to children ten years of age or younger.

(c) The State Department shall prepare a report addressing the issues identified in this subsection (7) and summarizing the findings and recommendations of the State Department. The report may include any recommendations regarding the implementation of a pilot program, but the State Department shall first obtain the approval of the general assembly before implementing such pilot program. The State Department shall provide such report to the General Assembly on or before March 15, 2002.

Special Note: This report is a combination of work conducted by Department of Human Services' staff, Rose Community Foundation and Creative Leadership Solutions. Professionals in the Child Welfare field, both individuals and organizations, were interviewed and/or consulted with regarding the areas to be researched as well as information to be contained in this document.

Questions regarding this report may be directed to Jean Abrams at the Department of Human Services, 303-866-5936.

Background Information

The State Department undertook a variety of activities to implement the Statute which are as follows:

- Through the summer of 2001, a survey was prepared and widely distributed both in paper form and on the Department's web site requesting opinions from the public and professionals regarding possible alternatives to foster care.
- Internet searches were done of various programs providing out-of-home care for children.
- Contact was made with agencies in other states which provided out-of-home services for children which were different from Colorado's approach to foster care.
- The Department contacted national organizations including Child Welfare League of America to solicit ideas for further research.
- A task force of individuals representing organizations that provide services to children and families was formed in the fall of 2001. The members represented a broad segment of the child welfare sector (Appendix A).

The task force recommended that the project be broken into phases. Phase One would entail a survey of current systems and programs in place within the state and interviewing experts and researchers within and outside the state that are addressing the issues identified in the legislation. The task force recommended that an outside consultant be hired to carry out Phase One.

Phase Two would involve site visits to promising programs that were identified in Phase One. Phase Three would involve conducting a pilot project based upon the General Assembly providing approval.

- The Department applied for and received a grant from the Rose Foundation to support the hiring of Creative Leadership Solutions in January of 2002.
- As a part of the grant, Rose Community Foundation agreed to fund travel to other states to investigate further viable programs as alternatives to foster care.

General Information

Colorado is a state supervised and county administered system. County Departments of Social/Human Services are charged with provision of necessary shelter, sustenance, and guidance to or for children who are or who, if such services are not provided, are likely to become neglected or dependent.

Children are placed out of their homes by county departments to assure the safety of the child or community. Placement occurs as a result of either an order of the court or a voluntary placement agreement between the county and the parents. If a child must be placed, it is preferable that the child be placed with relatives/kin. If kin or relatives are not available then placement into a foster home or more intensive/restrictive treatment setting may occur.

Foster homes are recruited, trained, certified, and supervised by either county departments or by child placement agencies. If a child has more intensive treatment needs, then placement may occur in a group home (supervised by either the county or child placement agency) or in a residential child care facility/residential treatment center. Child Placement Agencies, Group Homes and Residential Child Care Facilities are licensed by the State.

Both Federal Law and Colorado Statute require that the county department make reasonable efforts to prevent the placement of the child except in the case of an emergency. In addition, county departments must make reasonable efforts to reunify the child and family or find another permanent placement for the child.

Children must have a permanency hearing by the 12th month of placement and options for permanence include reunification with parents, placement with relatives/kin for adoption/guardianship, adoption, guardianship, other planned living arrangement or emancipation. If children have been in care 15 out of the past 22 months, then the county department is required to report on the exceptional circumstances that exist which support not filing for a termination of parental rights.

All the State laws governing the placement of children out of the home will not be covered here but are located in Titles 19 and 26 of the Statutes.

Research (Appendix B) and interviews with experts (Appendix C) in the field agree that a large percentage of children who are removed from their families suffer from emotional problems and/or mental health problems. When children are in multiple placements, many will also suffer from attachment problems. Helping children to attain a stable environment as soon as possible is very important in avoiding more severe and damaging emotional or mental health problems, as they grow older.

Most experts on child development and early childhood mental health issues agree that when a young child (0 – 10 years old) has to be removed from his or her parents that the child should be placed with one family until a permanent solution is developed. Permanent solutions usually mean reuniting the child with his or her biological parent(s), kinship/relative placements, adoption or other planned living arrangements. Most experts feel that unless there are extenuating circumstances for young children a group care environment does not provide enough one-to-one adult attention to develop healthy attachments.

There are some programs around the country that have children under 10 years old in group settings, but even those programs agree that there were no other options for the children and they try to provide as much of a home-like environment as possible.

The report writing, research and interviews conducted operated with the following assumptions:

- Children's safety is paramount.
- If safety is not an issue, keeping children in their homes and working with the whole family is very important.
- If children have to be removed from their homes, they should be placed in a permanent situation as soon as possible: reunification, adoption, or kinship care.
- No single program is right for every child and family.
- Everyone has the best interest of children and families at heart.

There is a special note about funding. While funding shouldn't be a consideration when a child or family is in need, funding issues are a reality for the state and counties. County resources are being stretched to the limits since the number of families in crisis has significantly increased (nationally the number of children in out-of-home placements has doubled since the late 1980's). Every organization contacted, public or private, was struggling with funding concerns particularly when state and county funding is not adequate to cover the services needed.

This report will offer suggestions for low cost ways to improve the current system in Colorado along with recommending alternative programs.

Methods of Preventing Out-of-Home Placement

Family Preservation and Family Support Programs

Virtually everyone who completed the Department's survey or who works with children in out-of-home situations agrees that if safety of the child isn't an issue or if the child doesn't need intensive therapy, keeping the children with their parents is the best possible option. Family preservation and family support programs that are well conceived and implemented can prevent out-of-home placement and are having success with strengthening families and reunifying children with their parents.

Several counties in Colorado already have strong family preservation/core services programs and can serve as models. Several counties also have strong family support programs which focus on early intervention and prevention as a means of preventing out-of-home placement.

Important aspects of successful family preservation or support programs are:

- There is an early and accurate assessment of the family situation to assure that the children are safe and so the proper support can be arranged for the family.
- The support is strength-based, meaning that caseworkers and therapists build on what is working well within the family and areas that will lead to continued success.
- The support works with the whole family as a unit instead of treating each member of the family separately.
- A team approach is used to provide support for the family, such as with Family Group Decision-Making or Wrap Around programs. These include the family in decisions that will develop positive changes within the family and they convene a support team for the family that might include other family members, clergy, teachers, therapists, and others who can be there to help the family.
- There is cooperation and trust with all the agencies that might come together to assist the family: mental health agencies, placement providers, family resource centers, county agencies, and other community organizations.
- Programs are hands-on and concrete in regard to outcomes.

Family support and family preservation programs are believed to be less expensive than out-of-home placement services, especially if several children in one family will be in out-of-home placements. While difficult to speculate in the long-term, the cost of preventive programs must be less than long-term foster placement, long-term residential treatment, or more restrictive options for an older child of hospitalization or incarceration to prevent harm to self or others.

Agencies interviewed report high caseloads and high stress work environments, which can lead to breakdowns in communication and oversight in case management. Counties where agencies come together in a spirit of mutual cooperation and with a focus on the families have been very successful in reducing the number of children in out-of-home placements, and when children have been removed from their homes, with successful reunification of families.

There are some challenges in Colorado to establishing successful family preservation and family support programs:

- There are insufficient agencies to provide services in the rural and smaller counties. While these counties have fewer children in foster care, there are also fewer resources available. For counties far from an urban center, time and distance are barriers to providing effective family support.
- There are not enough resources and support for kinship providers if they aren't certified as foster parents by the county. It is believed the number of kinship providers would increase if counties could provide more financial assistance and support. More support and funding for kinship care could save money for out-of-home placements.
- Highly qualified and trained personnel are needed to provide family support /preservation services. A family in crisis needs someone who is supportive, yet firm, to assure that they are making progress and able to handle the responsibility of raising children and balancing work and family life.
- Family support/preservation program's rate of payment doesn't cover an agency's expenses for providing treatment to the family. The "gap", if it is covered, is usually covered by private donations. Therefore there is sometimes subtle pressure to have a family meet a timetable set by funding deadlines and large caseloads rather than what is in the best interest of the child and family.
- Developing and maintaining good communication between agencies and counties involved in the family's life is particularly challenging.

To help family support and family preservation programs to be more successful, Creative Leadership Solutions recommends that CDHS could do the following:

1. Use either the Mesa or El Paso County model for building cooperation among agencies providing family support programs.
2. Expand the models for successful collaboration and share it with other counties that want to develop or improve family support programs.
3. Provide training programs around the state sharing information about what is working well using some of the in-state experts.
4. Consider the Wrap Around program as a statewide, long-term initiative.
5. Continue to educate counties about the positive benefits of using the Multi-Systemic Therapy Program which works with all of the systems involved with children or youth with high needs.

A special mention about Wrap Around services: John Vandenberg is one of the leading experts on Wrap Around services and he has recently moved his consulting business to Colorado. Wrap Around is a comprehensive community mental health approach for children and families that have severe emotional and behavioral problems. It is similar to Family Group Decision-making, because it brings the family and all the people involved with the family together to develop a plan for how a situation will change. It puts the family in control and the major difference FGDM is that the support team and parent work together for a long time. By 1998, Wrap Around had been implemented in many communities within nine states and it has been expanding rapidly ever since. Wrap Around is comprehensively implemented from the Governor's office down to the local level, because it takes a commitment from everyone involved with family support to make it work successfully. States that have comprehensively implemented Wrap Around, have seen out-of-home placements reduced by 60% or more.

Innovative Approaches to Foster Care & Programs that Enhance the Ability to Provide Stability for Children

Through the course of gathering information for this report, it is apparent that alternatives to foster care mean different things to different individuals. Some individuals interpret alternatives to foster care as preventing foster care placement. Others interpret the phrase to mean innovative out-of-home placement programs which are different than those used in Colorado. This section reports on both areas along with programs that would create a more stable environment for children 0 – 10 years old.

- Hull House's Neighbor to Neighbor Program:
 - It is a foster care program that recruits, trains, supports and pays foster parents as professional providers with a salary, and one caregiver agrees not to work outside the home.
 - Since it is community based, the foster children don't have to leave the part of town that is familiar to them.
 - The program was started to respond to the needs of the African-American community, but as the program spread to other communities, it has been found to work with other ethnic groups as well.
 - The foster homes specialize in serving sibling groups and will maintain a bed for a child who may go to another setting temporarily.
 - Hull House foster parents are specially trained to work with biological parents so the program works well with the whole family foster care concept and other family support programs.
 - The salary for professional foster parents is approximately \$16,000 with an average of 4 children in care. The cost is similar to one foster home with four children who are Level One for a year.
 - Hull House helps other communities start their programs for free for the first year. After the first year, some technical assistance is free and other technical assistance is paid for.
 - Hull House is willing to work with other organizations and the program doesn't have to operate as an affiliate of the Hull House program.

- Casey Foundation Family to Family program – Colorado already is implementing pilot projects in Denver and El Paso Counties, as a result of work initiated a year ago. While Family to Family is a community-based program that focuses on recruitment, training and retention of foster parents, it also focuses on building public/private partnerships with the community. It encourages the use of kinship care through the formal foster care system. The Family to Family program has had excellent results in other states that have been implementing the program. The main difference between Family to Family and Neighbor to Neighbor is that Neighbor to Neighbor focuses on keeping sibling groups together and treating foster parents as professionals.
- Wrap Around Programs - The program exists in many communities and states around the country, but especially in Baltimore, Kentucky, and Florida. This is a comprehensive process that was described earlier. The program is currently funded through the federal grant, the Cornerstone Project in Denver, Jefferson and Clear Creek counties. Given the support that exists in Colorado for the ideology of including the family as equal partners in the treatment process, the program has likely been implemented in varying degrees across the State.
- Hope Meadows (recently changed its name to Generations of Hope) – This is a program in Illinois that promotes foster/adoptive homes for up to four children, mostly sibling groups. Married or single parents, who are 55 years old or older, can receive rent-free housing or renovated housing at a former air force base. At least one parent does not work outside of the home and the parents agree to weekly parenting training. There is on-site professional counseling. The program has had good success with adoption of the children by the foster parents. Hope Meadows prefers to take children that need long-term foster care or permanent placement.
- Mooseheart – This is a large community in rural Illinois founded over 70 years ago by the Fraternity of Moose Lodges. They care for children that range from very young to 18. They have family oriented small group homes with teaching parents. They also have schools, health centers and other services within the Mooseheart community. They take children from abused and neglected homes, but they don't take children with severe problems. They appear to get good results, but the program is expensive. All the expenses are paid by the Moose lodges across the country. Unless the Moose Lodge or another organization will take on this project, it may not be easy to replicate.

- Boys Town – A long time successful program that started in Omaha, Nebraska but now has affiliate homes in 19 states. Boys Town has evolved over the years and strives to create a home-like environment within a cottage system. Young children are limited to about 4-6 children per home and these cottages are set a little away from older children. Boys Town has had a lot of success over the years and like other group home programs tries to keep stability within its staff. Like other group homes it struggles with recruiting and retaining good committed house parents. People who have come out of Boys Town have felt that it was the right program for them, but they were older children when they entered Boys Town. There isn't much information about the impact of the program on younger children and only the main campus appears to take younger children.
- SOS Villages – There are 500 SOS villages in 73 countries around the world. There are SOS Villages in Illinois and Florida. The concept was developed in Austria after World War II to provide a home-like environment for children who were orphaned during the war. They specialize with sibling groups and hard to place children and they state that they are different from traditional foster care, because the placements are permanent. They recruit parents that agree to live at the Village and stay with the children to adulthood. Approximately 10 homes comprise a village and the parents support one another in the care of the children. Each village has approximately 50 children per village. The Village in Illinois is located in a rural area south of Chicago and has 10 homes, each staffed with house parents who make a long-term commitment to the children and the Village concept. The Florida Village has 11 homes in a suburban neighborhood, which initially opposed having the homes in this area. The children are all in the custody of Social Services, are covered by Medicaid, with the monthly cost for each child of \$1,200. The Village is a private non-profit organization and needs approximately \$5 million in start up funds.

Other programs explored in less depth than the foregoing are:

- Hershey School – offers services from a young age to graduation from high school. The school is located in Pennsylvania and has an operating trust from the Hershey Foundation valued at \$5 billion. The school houses 1,200 children from the age of 4 – 18 years old. There are only 12 children who are age 4 placed at the facility. The children are housed in 117 homes staffed by house parents. The house parents work from 3 pm to 8:30 am and have every other weekend off. Turnover of house parents is a concern that Hershey acknowledges. The facility has only 3% of the children who do not have parents and parental involvement is encouraged. There are vacations for the children throughout the year as well as long weekends. The children can spend summers with their family or remain on the campus.

Children need to maintain a C average in school in order to remain in the program and the goal for all children is high school graduation. It was unclear whether the department of social services was a placing agency with the Hershey School.

- Childhelp Villages – have facilities around the country that operate as residential child care facilities at the cost of \$5,613 per month, per child. The average age of the children housed in these facilities are 9 years old with the average length of stay from 18 – 24 months.
- Goodland Presbyterian Children’s Home, Inc. – is a private facility for placement of boys between the ages of 6 – 14 years old. The average length of stay is 12 months and the average age of the boys are 9 years old. Parents retain custody and pay for the placement on a sliding fee scale.
- Saint Joseph’s Orphanage in Cincinnati – has three programs, two short-term intensive crisis programs lasting 90 days or less and a long-term program for adolescent sexual perpetrators with an average length of stay of 19 months. Cost for the program is \$316 per day.

Colorado's Foster Care Program

Child Welfare professionals who were interviewed agree that a critical component of improving stability for children in out-of-home placement and for preventing out-of-home placement is to look at those areas of Colorado's current practices in the foster care system that could be improved upon. As Creative Leadership Solutions interviewed professionals associated with Colorado's Child Welfare system, information was compiled summarizing the areas that were of concern to those interviewed.

An Ideal Foster Care Program would include:

- Dedicated foster parents.
- High standards for training.
- On-going evaluation of training to ensure high standards are maintained.
- A coordinated system to monitor foster homes.
- Adequate reimbursement for care of children.
- A program for recruitment and retention of foster parents.

Challenges to Colorado's Foster Care System include:

- Counties including foster parents as a part of the decision-making team.
- Reimbursement for care of children should match the cost of care.
- Improved coordination of services between agencies that work with children and families.
- A strong recruitment and retention program to attract quality foster parents including solutions to address the shortage of foster homes, particularly in the rural areas of the state.
- Counties or Child Placement Agencies providing adequate support for foster parents.
- Regular monitoring of foster homes irrespective of the certifying authority.

- Programs that maintain children in one foster home until the child reaches permanency. Develop programs to support children returning to the same foster home if reunification fails or a child needs a higher level of care for a period of time.
- Develop mechanisms for foster parents to discuss problems they are having with caseworkers.
- Develop a forum for foster parents statewide to have input on State policy decisions related to foster homes.
- Develop local foster parent organizations to provide support, mentoring, recruitment, and training.
- Review and improve how county staff is recruited, screened, trained, evaluated and retained.
- Create a mentor program where higher performing caseworkers would be paid extra to mentor a new caseworker, and would help the new caseworker with on-the-job training.
- Caseworkers should be team players and open to seeking advice from everyone involved with the child and family. Ultimately, decisions have to be made by the caseworker, but seeking input creates trust and demonstrates that others' time and thoughts are valued.
- Some counties are using an internship program as a way to prepare college graduates for caseworker positions. This has been successful with both preparing future caseworkers and screening out individuals that aren't suited for this type of work.
- Counties should look for creative ways to provide funding for family support programs, kinship care, and post adoption services. Several counties are using TANF funds to provide job training, childcare, counseling, and other services that families need if they are going to change the conditions that caused a crisis.
- CDHS can continue to support the many county/state collaborative groups with best practice and communication as high priorities.
- CDHS can continue to update the Child Welfare web site with current information regarding policies and programs.

Summary and Recommendations

Even one child that is in an unsafe environment is one child too many. Likewise, even one family that could be helped but isn't, is one family too many. The General Assembly is commended for addressing the issue of how to create more stability for children 0 – 10 years old. State standards are high and the state, counties and providers are aware of the issues. In many categories, Colorado is viewed as a progressive state.

The continuum of care should be considered when looking at alternative programs to bring to the state. This means that the situations, issues and interventions of families and children are complex and no one program will work in every situation. The more cooperation there is between public/private agencies and programs; and the more barriers to cooperation are removed or minimized, the better support families and children will receive. Continuum of care also means that some families will need short-term minimal assistance and other families will need drastic intervention. The less drastic the intervention the better and the judgment needed to make those decisions will require competent, trained and committed staff within all the agencies that would be involved in any decisions about the family or children, including involving the families themselves as much as possible.

Recommendations:

The Department is recommending the following:

1. That the Department, county departments and providers continue to work together to improve current programs so that Colorado's foster care system can offer the best care possible to children and families.
2. That the Department along with county departments work to increase the use of the Wrap Around Program.
3. That the Department work with counties and providers to develop programming that allows foster children to return to a foster home they were previously a member of, should a child require such placement after a more restrictive placement or a failed permanent plan.
4. That the Department host training where counties can share best practices with each other in the areas of placement prevention, early intervention and prevention and family preservation/support programs.
5. That the Department use Annie E. Casey Foundation funding to conduct statewide training of foster parents and county staff to further the implementation of the Family to Family model statewide in Colorado.
6. Include a site visit to SOS Villages as well as Hull House with the purpose of exploring the feasibility of replication in Colorado.

Appendices

SB 211 Task Force Members

Abrams, Jean, Colorado Department of Human Services, jean.abrams@state.co.us

Bethurium, Sherry, Colorado State Foster Parent Association, childrensnetwork@juno.com

Beveridge, Jane, Colorado Department of Human Services, jane.beveridge@state.co.us

Clapp, Lauri, State Representative, lauriclapp@qwest.net

Davis, Dixie, The Adoption Exchange, Dixie@adoptex.org

Hendricks, Heidi, Children's Welfare League of America, hhendricks@cwla.org

Hildenbrand, Bill, Savio House, bhildenbrand@saviohouse.org

Holguin, Elsa, Rose Community Foundation, eholguin@rcfdenver.org

Johnson, Lynn, The Governor's Office, Lynn.Johnson@state.co.us

Leopoldus, Andi, Child Placement Agency, andile@aol.com

Long, Peggy, Colorado Association of Families and Children's Agencies, cafca1@aol.com

Merkel-Holguin, Lisa, American Humane Association, lmerkel-holguin@americanhumane.org

Mondragon, Dan, Rose Community Foundation, dmondragon@rcfdenver.org

Musgrave, Marilyn, State Senator, mmusgrave@qwest.net

Phelan, Adele, Consultant-RCF, adeleph@aol.com

Potter, Cathryn, DU Grad School of Social Work, cpotter@du.edu

Rodriguez, Judy, Colorado Department of Human Services, judy.rodriguez@state.co.us

Roe, Melody, Adoption Exchange, melody@adoptex.org

Rychener, Dallas, Mount Saint Vincent Home, drychener@msvhome.org

Shink, Shari, Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center, sshink@mail.law.du.edu

Tiernan, Bob, Denver Area Youth Services, btiernan@denveryouth.org

Organizations/Research Papers that Provided Background Information for SB 211 Report

"America's Children: How Are They Doing?" FactSheet by American Humane Association 1997

"Foster Care Today" by Barbell & Freundlich published by Casey Family Programs 2001

"Group Care and Young Children" published by University of Chicago
1997

"Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care" published by Blueprints for Violence Prevention 1998

"Should We Return to Orphanages?" - published by American Humane Association 1994

"Stages of Child Development"- published by Colorado Child Welfare
1998

"The State of the Children: An Examination of Government-Run Foster Care" by National Center
American Public Human Services Association

Child Abuse and Neglect Data by American Humane Association 1999-
2001

Denver County/Savio Direct Link Program- PowerPoint presentation
review

Factsheets/ Publications by the Health and Human Services Children's Bureau

Family Foster Care Fact Sheet by Child Welfare League of America 1998
for Policy Analysis NCPS Study #210

News Release- "Public Child Welfare Agencies Face Staffing Problems" published by

N'tl Foster Parent Association News and Issues by National Foster Parent Association, Inc. 2001

Policy Statement- Children's Services (6 total) by American Humane Association

Resources for Child Caring, Inc. - Minnesota Department of Human Services 1986

State Foster Parent Training Requirements by National Foster Parent Association, Inc. 2001

State of Colorado- Department of Human Services

People/Organizations Interviewed by Creative Leadership Solutions for SB 01-211

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>
Abrams, Jean	Colorado Department of Human Services
Alexander, Kay	State Representative
Andrews, Dana	Colorado Department of Human Services
Arnold, Ken	State Senator
Barnard, Suzanne	Amer. Public Human Service Assoc./Casey Family to Family National Director
Berns, David	Department of Human Services (El Paso County)
Bethurium, Sherry	Colorado State Foster Parent's Association
Blair, Adoree	Long-serving Foster Parent
Bonk, Kathy	Communications Consortium Media Center
Clapp, Lauri	State Representative
Coleman, Fran	State Representative
Congrove, Jim	Former State Senator
Cooper, Bob	Colorado Christian Home
Cronin, Mary	Piton Foundation (Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Welfare)
Daniels, John	Boys and Girls Town
Davis, Dixie	Adoption Exchange
Eaton, David	Private Citizen who grew up in group homes
Eheart, Brenda	Generations of Hope
Edwards, Myles	American Humane Association
Epps, Mary Ellen	State Senator
Erjavec, Patty	El Pueblo Boys and Girls Ranch
Ford, Sharen	Colorado Department of Human Services
Fremgen, Marianne	Project PAVE
Gallegos, Mike	Colorado Department of Human Services
Gardner, Pat Sister	El Ranchito de los Ninos
Gruber, Susan	Department of Human Services (Summit County)
Harris, Marshella	Hull House
Hendricks, Heidi	Child Welfare League of America
Hildenbrand, Bill	Savio House
Holguin, Elsa	Rose Community Foundation
Jacobsen, Cheryl	Colorado Department of Human Services
Johnson, Lynn	Governor's Office
Jones, Dale	Mooseheart
Koch, Jennifer	Catholic Charities
Leopoldus, Andi	Child Placement Agencies Network
Linkhart, Doug	State Senator
Little, Christina	Kempe Children's Center
Little, Oneida	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Lowenbach, Robert	Judge with 18 years Juvenile Court experience (Weld County)
Marquart, Jim	Casey Family Program
Maza, Penny	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Children's Bureau
McNulty, Bonnie	Presidio Group

Merkel-Holguin, Lisa	American Humane Association
Mihalic, Sharon	University of Colorado Center for Study and Prevention of Violence
Miller, Julie	Department of Human Services (Denver County)
Musgrave, Marilyn	State Senator
Ortiz, Cec	Annie E. Casey Foundation Consultant
Papin, Tom	Department of Human Services (Mesa County)
Phelan, Adele	Consultant
Pollack, Allen	Department of Human Services (Boulder County)
Potter, Cathryn	University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work
Rodriquez, Judy	Colorado Department Human Services
Roe, Melody	Adoption Exchange
Rosenblum, Betsy	American Public Human Service Association
Rychener, Dallas	Mount Saint Vincent Home
Sears, Sandi	FACES
Shauffer, Carol	National Youth Law Center
Shapiro, Mary Jo*	SOS Villages - USA * = trading information via voice mail messages
Shink, Shari	Rocky Mountain Youth Law Center
Silverman, Karen	Colorado Association of Family and Children's Agencies
Sullivan, Hernandez	Magistrate in El Paso County Juvenile Court
Tiernan, Bob	Denver Area Youth Services
Tully, Margaret	Kempe Children's Center
Vandenberg, John	Vandenberg Consultants
Winterfield, Amy	American Humane Association

SB 211 Organizations that Provided Information about Potential Alternatives to Foster Care

*indicates organizations with potential programs that were reviewed

American Humane Association	www.americanhumane.org
Boys and Girls Town	www.boystown.org
Buckner Baptist Benevolences*	www.buckner.org
Cascade Boys Ranch*	www.cbr.org
Casey Foundation	www.aecf.org
Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence	www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints
Charlee Program*	www.charleeprogram.org
Child's Help USA*	www.childhelpusa.org
El Ranchito de Los Ninos*	
FACES	
Generations of Hope*	www.generationsofhope.org
Goodland Presbyterian Children's Home*	www.goodland.org
Hull House*	www.hullhouse.org
Kempe Children's Center	www.kempecenter.org
KidsPeace/Mesabi Academy*	www.kidspeace.org
Mesa County and Educare Family Support Services*	www.educarecolorado.org
Moosehart*	C:\TEMP\MooseInt.htm
Mount Saint Vincent Home	www.msvhome.org
Milton Hershey School*	www.mhs-pa.org
Orphan Foundation of America	www.orphan.org
Oxford Orphanage*	www.ibiblio.org/orphanage
Presbyterian Home for Children*	www.main.nc.us/phfc
Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center	www.rockymountainchildrenlawcenter.org
Savio House	www.saviohouse.org
Saint Joseph Orphanage*	www.sjkids.org
SOS Villages*	www.soschildrensvillages.org
Thornwell Home and School for Children*	www.thornwell.org
Vandenberg Consulting Wrap Around Services	www.vroonvdb.com
ZERA Foundation*	www.zerafoundation.org

Facts About Children in Out-of-Home Placements and Facts About Funding

Basic Facts about Children in Out of Home Placements from 1999-2000

According to the Casey Family Programs, in 2000 there were approximately 1,800,000 cases nationally that were judged to warrant an investigation and potential intervention.

The Casey Programs also estimated that there were 568,000 children living in foster homes nationally about double from the late 1980's.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimated in 1999 that there were 826, 162 child victims and slightly over 200,000 living in out-of-home placements. The difference in the numbers could be attributed to difficulties in collecting data more than a huge increase from 1999 to 2000.

In 2000, CDHS estimated that there were 7571 children in out-of-home placements from all categories. There were 3249 children under the age of ten. National trends pertain to Colorado that the number of children in out-of-home placements is increasing.

CDHS estimated that:

- 13% of children with length of stay of less than 12 months had 3 or more placements.
- 41% of children with length of stay of 12 months to 24 months had 3 or more placements
- 57% of children with length of stay of 24 to 36 months had 3 or more placements
- 66% of children with length of stay of 36 to 48 months had 3 or more placements
- 76% of children with length of stay of over 48 months had 3 or more placements

In 1999, HHS estimated that 23, 761 children received preventive services.

In 2001, CDHS licensed 9,900 facilities. Because counties license their foster homes, the 9900 figure doesn't include county foster homes - there were 1489 county certified foster homes. The 1794 CPA foster homes are part of the 9900 figure.

Funding

The state estimates that it spends roughly \$350 million per year on child welfare services.

Cost per child placement varies by county, but generally the cost per child in a CPA vs. a County Foster Home is \$1,571 to \$477.

Reimbursements have not increased a lot in recent years.

Using Denver County as an example, since costs vary by county and the level that the children are rated (Level 0 are children with fewer difficulties and Level 3 have more difficulties):

Level 0 funding is about \$369 per child per month
Level 1 funding is about \$600 per child per month
Level 2 funding is about \$800 per child per month
Level 3 funding is about \$1000 per child per month

According to the Child Welfare League of America in 1998, Colorado was about in the middle of the range for monthly maintenance rates for younger children and on the low side of reimbursement for older children. (Colorado's considers the age of the children in its rating system.)

From the National Clearinghouse website, a report published in 1995 by the Colorado Children's Trust Fund shows the savings from preventive programs:

A similar 1995 analysis, commissioned by the Colorado Children's Trust Fund, examined the costs incurred in the State of Colorado by failing to prevent child abuse and neglect, and then compared these costs with the savings that would accrue from an investment in effective prevention services (Gould & O'Brien, 1995). The State estimated \$190 million in annual direct costs for child maltreatment, including the costs of CPS investigations, child welfare services to children in their own homes, and out-of-home placements. In addition, annual indirect costs were calculated based on an assumption that \$212 million (approximately 20 percent of the \$1 billion total expenditure) in State social programs were associated with the long-term consequences to individuals maltreated as children (e.g., special education, AFDC assistance payments, job training programs, youth institutional and community programs, mental health programs for children and adults, substance and drug abuse programs, victim services, criminal justice programs, domestic violence shelters, and prisons). Indirect costs (\$212 million) and direct costs (\$190 million) combined for an estimated total of \$402 million in annual expenditures related to abuse and neglect.

The State costs of maltreatment were compared to the potential savings associated with an intensive home visitor prevention program targeted toward those families most at risk of abuse and neglect. Based on an estimated \$2,000 per-family cost of a State-wide home visitation program for high risk families with children from birth to 3 years old, the Colorado analysis projected total costs of \$32 million. At the time of the study, \$8 million was being spent in the State on home visitation and family support, thus suggesting a need for \$24 million in new money. The Colorado analysis concluded that if the program were able to reduce child maltreatment expenditure by only 6 percent (.06 x \$402 million annual expenditure), the cost of the prevention investment would be offset.

Information about Creative Leadership Solutions

Creative Leadership Solutions (CLS) was hired to assist the Department with the completion of the Alternatives to Foster Care Report. CLS conducted the study, which is really more of a survey of what is working well and where there is general agreement that systems or procedures could be improved within the foster care system of Colorado. CLS did not have time to conduct a thorough study and in reality each area could have justified an in-depth study on its own. During most of the study, CLS was concerned that items of great importance and complexity might be trivialized. Steve Werner, president of CLS, and Ed Weaver, senior consultant, collaborated on this study. Steve has twenty years of senior management experience in the nonprofit sector in the areas of program management, organizational development and management, strategic planning, and fundraising. Before starting CLS, he was senior vice president of programs for Habitat for Humanity International. More importantly, Steve and his wife were foster parents for 14 years in Texas and Colorado. Ed has even more experience since he retired as senior vice president for programs at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City. Before that he was founding chairman of the School for Nonprofit Management at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. He also served as CEO of the American Public Human Service Association and served in senior management with the Illinois Department of Human Services.

CLS takes this opportunity to thank everyone who graciously took time to be interviewed or to share research or other findings with us. CLS would also like to thank the legislators and state officials that were concerned about the child in out-of-home placements and who want Colorado to lead the nation in its care of these children and their families. CLS would also like to acknowledge the senior staff at CDHS for their support of this study. And last but not least, CLS thanks Elsa Holguin and the Rose Community Foundation for their leadership and generosity.

Senate Bill 01-211 Questionnaire

A number of surveys were sent out to a variety of people and agencies that work with children on 07/20/01. The survey was sent to all county departments, providers, legislators, and any other interested parties. The survey was also available on the State Child Welfare web-site. Closing date for responses was 09/15/01. Fifty-eight completed surveys were received and the following summarizes the responses:

1. What does "alternative to foster care" mean to you?

Responses	Numbers
• Preventative and in-home services	27
• Kinship care	22
• Group homes	8
• Orphanages	6
• Respite care	5
• Specialized/therapeutic foster home	4
• Whole family placement	4
• Community care	4
• Adoption	3
• Stable long term care	3
• Early assessment	3
• Expedited permanency planning	3
• Flexible funding	3

One or two responses were received from the following:

- Independent Living Services
- Guardianship
- Time-out care
- After school program
- Family therapy
- Expand financial incentive for foster care
- Parenting classes
- Forever families
- Mentoring of biological families by foster families
- Reduce caseloads
- Substance abuse treatment
- Aftercare
- Mental Health Services
- Faith based partnerships
- Limit number of foster children
- Early intervention

2. Are you aware of initiatives, demonstration projects, pilots or other practice issues that you would recommend the Department explore?

- Whole Family Care
- Family Group Decision Making
- “Build a Generation”
- Wrap Around
- Mental Health Services
- Collaboration between agencies
- In-home training and support program\
- Preston ranch Ministries
- R.E.A.C.H.
- Rapid Response Team
- Home based program
- Direct Link, Savio
- Early Intervention Program
- Restorative justice
- Family to Family
- Prevention and community based programs
- Mooseheart
- Wilderness Program
- Equine Assisted Counseling
- SOS Villages
- Hope Meadows
- Specialized family foster care with treatment component
- Generations
- Girls and Boys Town
- Residential Treatment Center partnering with parents
- Kinship Care
- Respite Care
- Expedited Permanency Planning

3. If you have answered yes to question #2 is there a specific web site or mail address that you are aware of from which the department could gather information?

The information provided was used by staff and the contractor to gather information about these programs.

4. Are you available in assisting the Department to follow-up on ideas or information provided as a result of this survey?
32 people stated that they were willing to participate at some level in this activity. The task force was largely drawn from this list.

A copy of the complete narrative remarks is available on request.